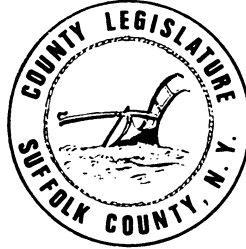


NEWS FROM Legislator **Lou D'Amaro**



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Legislator D'Amaro Alerts Residents: HEAP Applications Now Available

(HUNTINGTON STATION, NY... November 17, 2011) –As temperatures drop, concerns rise about the ability to afford the high cost of heating our homes. That's why Suffolk Legislator Lou D'Amaro (D-Huntington Station) wants to inform County residents that applications are now available for the Federally-funded Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) that can provide much-needed financial assistance for low income and senior citizen households.

"Times are tough and residents should not have to choose whether to heat their homes or put food on the table," D'Amaro said. "Luckily, the HEAP program provides much needed assistance to Suffolk County families struggling through this difficult economic period."

Depending on their primary heating source, qualifying homeowners and renters can receive the regular HEAP benefit of \$450 for oil, propane and kerosene and up to \$250 for natural gas, electricity or wood.

(more)

Eligibility for the program is based on income and household size. A family's gross monthly household income must be at or below the poverty standards set by New York State for HEAP. For example, monthly income for a 1-person household cannot exceed \$2,146, for a 2-person household the limit is \$2,806 and for a 3 or 4-person household it cannot exceed \$3,466 or \$4,127 respectively. Last year, thousands of Suffolk County households received assistance through HEAP.

Assistance is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis while available. More information is available by calling the HEAP hotline at (631) 853-8825. Senior citizens, disabled residents and previous recipients should have automatically received applications by mail in August. Non-emergency new applications are now available and can be obtained and completed in person at the Suffolk County Department of Social Services South West Center, located at 2 South 2nd Street in Deer Park, (631) 854-6684 or accessed online at www.otda.state.ny.us/main/application.asp.

"I urge all residents who qualify or even think they may qualify to apply for this assistance," D'Amaro said.

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Suffolk County Legislator Lou D'Amaro (D-Huntington Station) represents the 17th Legislative District, which includes parts of Huntington Station, Huntington, South Huntington, West Hills, Melville, Dix Hills, Deer Park and North Babylon. He is Vice-Chairman of the Environment, Planning & Agriculture and a member of the Budget & Finance and Veterans & Seniors committees of the Suffolk County Legislature.